



Department of Economic and
Community Development

Office of the Arts

Connecticut Celebrates the Role of the Arts in Building Vibrant Communities

On Thursday, March 2, 2017, hundreds of artists, arts leaders and arts supporters are expected to partake in the second annual Connecticut Arts Day, a free, day-long event to celebrate and learn about the successes and aspirations of the arts and cultural sector in the state. The theme of this year's event is *Moving Forward*, which will focus on the importance of cross-sector collaboration.

"Harnessing the power of the arts to develop innovative solutions to complex problems across all industries and sectors ultimately leads to more vibrant communities and acts as a catalyst for the economy," said Kristina Newman-Scott, Director of Culture for the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). "The 2016 Connecticut Arts Day was an incredible celebration of arts, artists and innovation and we are very excited to continue the momentum into this year's Arts Day and beyond."

Arts Day will feature state, regional and nationally acclaimed artists, advocates, innovators, state leaders and legislators. Among them:

- Laura Callanan, a Founding Partner of Upstart Co-Lab, a national collaboration connecting artists, impact investors and social entrepreneurs to create more opportunities for artists to deliver social impact at scale;
- Pam Breau, Chief Executive Officer of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, whose mission is to strengthen states arts agencies;
- Andi Mathis, State & Regional Specialist for the National Endowment for the Arts, an agency that funds, promotes and strengthens the creative capacity of communities;
- Elizabeth Monoian and Robert Ferry, Founding Directors of the Land Generator Art Initiative, a national project focused on creating an artistic movement that can set a course towards aesthetic considerations in sustainable infrastructure;
- Cathy Edwards, Executive Director of the New England Foundation for the Arts, an organization that cultivates and promotes the arts in New England and beyond; and
- Jock Reynolds, Henry J. Heinz II Director of the Yale University Art Gallery and Honorary Chair of this year's Connecticut Arts Day.

Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman, DECD Commissioner Catherine Smith, State Senator Tony Hwang, Representatives Matt Ritter, Themis Klarides, Toni E. Walker, and Caroline Simmons also will be participating in the event.

The performances that will take place during Arts Day this year represent the diversity of the arts within the state and highlight arts participation and artistic excellence by artists from varying demographics and walks of life. This includes the opening act by noted national artist Pamela Z, which will be a combination piece featuring composition and multimedia arts; WAR STORIES: A Veterans Project produced by Fairfield University's Quick Center for the Arts; the UConn Chamber Singers; the Connecticut Poet Laureate, Rennie McQuilkin; Connecticut State Troubadour, Kate Callahan; and the University of Hartford Dissidents Quintet, amongst other performers.

The Connecticut Office of the Arts will also be announcing details of its new initiative, [SpaceFinder Connecticut](#), a free statewide creative space database to support the creative economy, which will be executed in partnership with The Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County.

Connecticut Arts Day is free and open to the public, but space is limited. The program will begin at 8:30 a.m. in The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts and will transition to the Connecticut State Capitol at 10:30 a.m. Those interested in attending can register [online](#).

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